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- (54) **TRANSMITTER OPTICAL SIGNAL TO NOISE RATIO IMPROVEMENT THROUGH RECEIVER AMPLIFICATION IN SINGLE LASER COHERENT SYSTEMS**
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See application file for complete search history.

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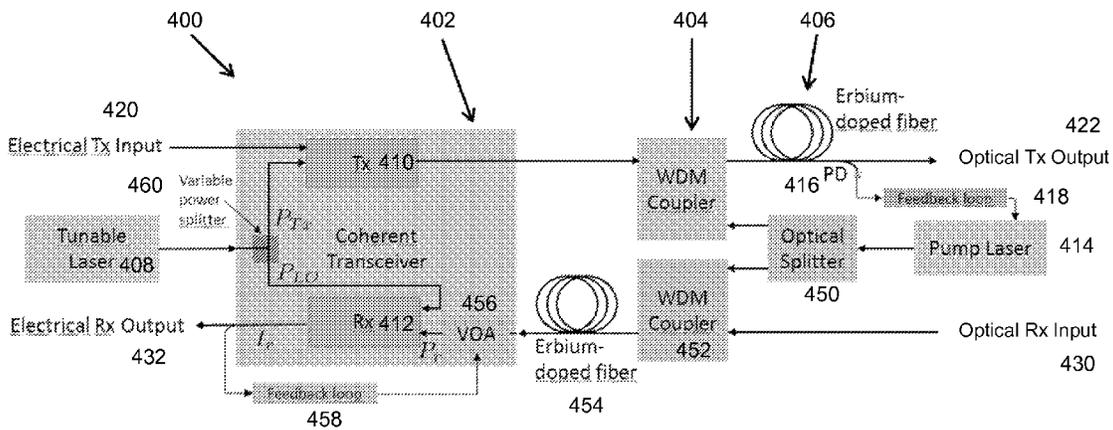
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(57) **ABSTRACT**
A transceiver having an improved transmitter optical signal to noise ratio, and methods of making and using the same.

11 Claims, 4 Drawing Sheets



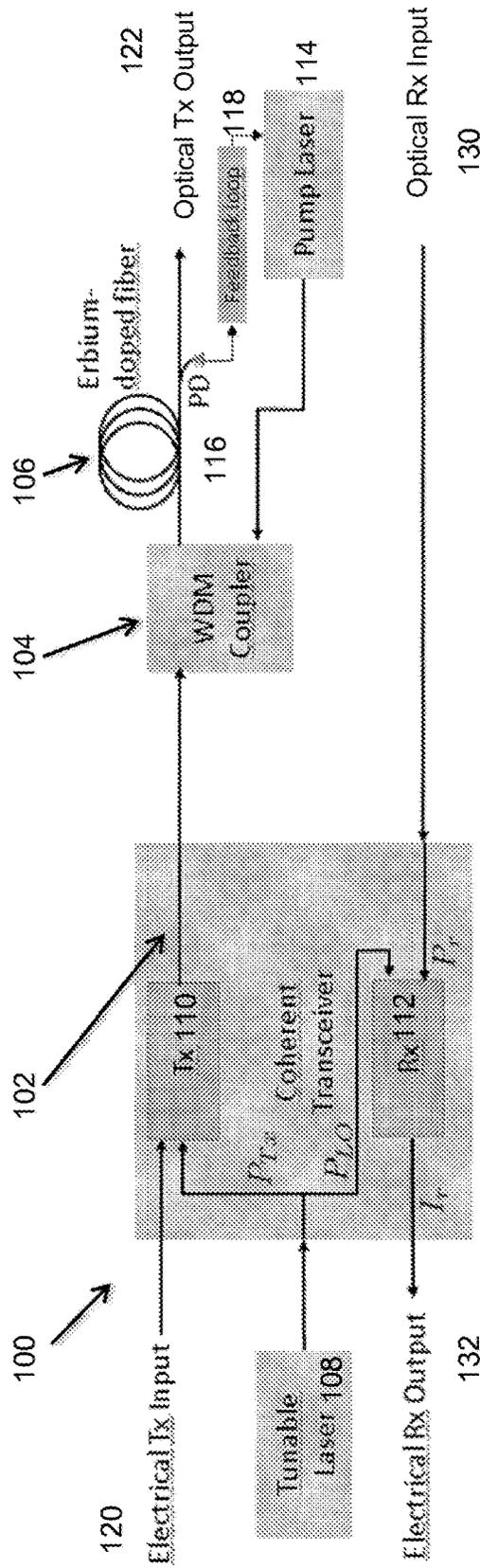
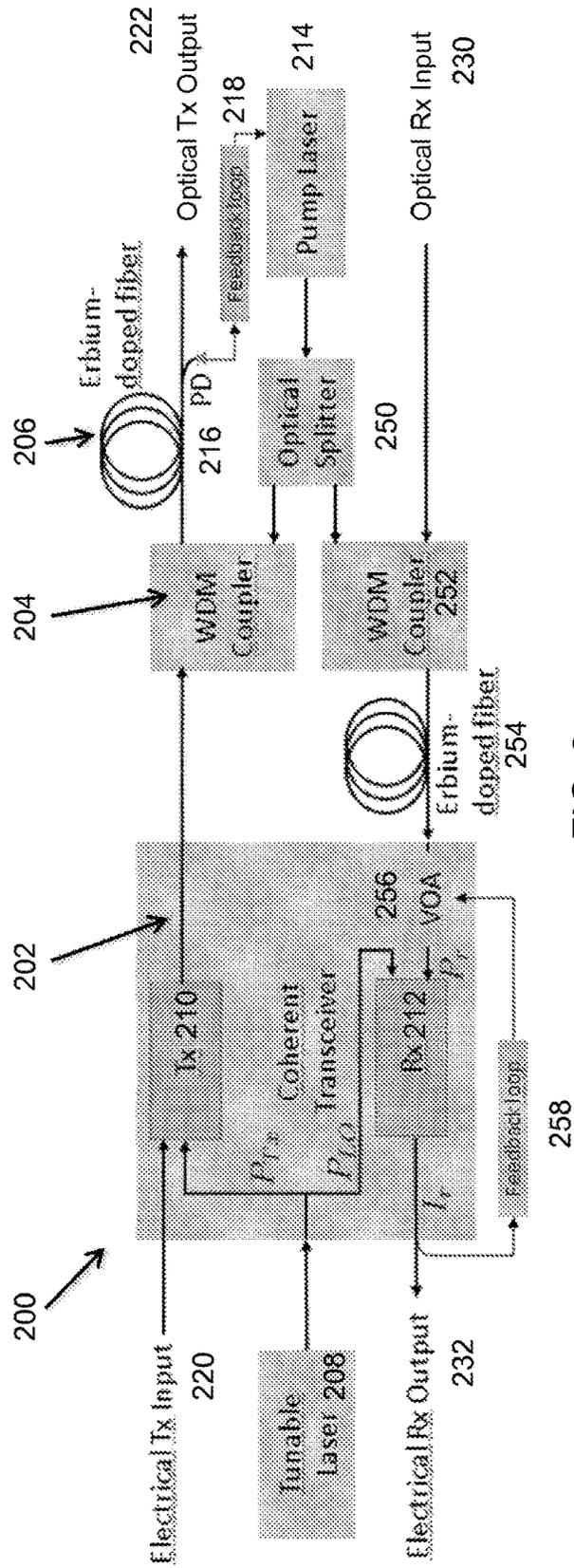


FIG. 1

PRIOR ART



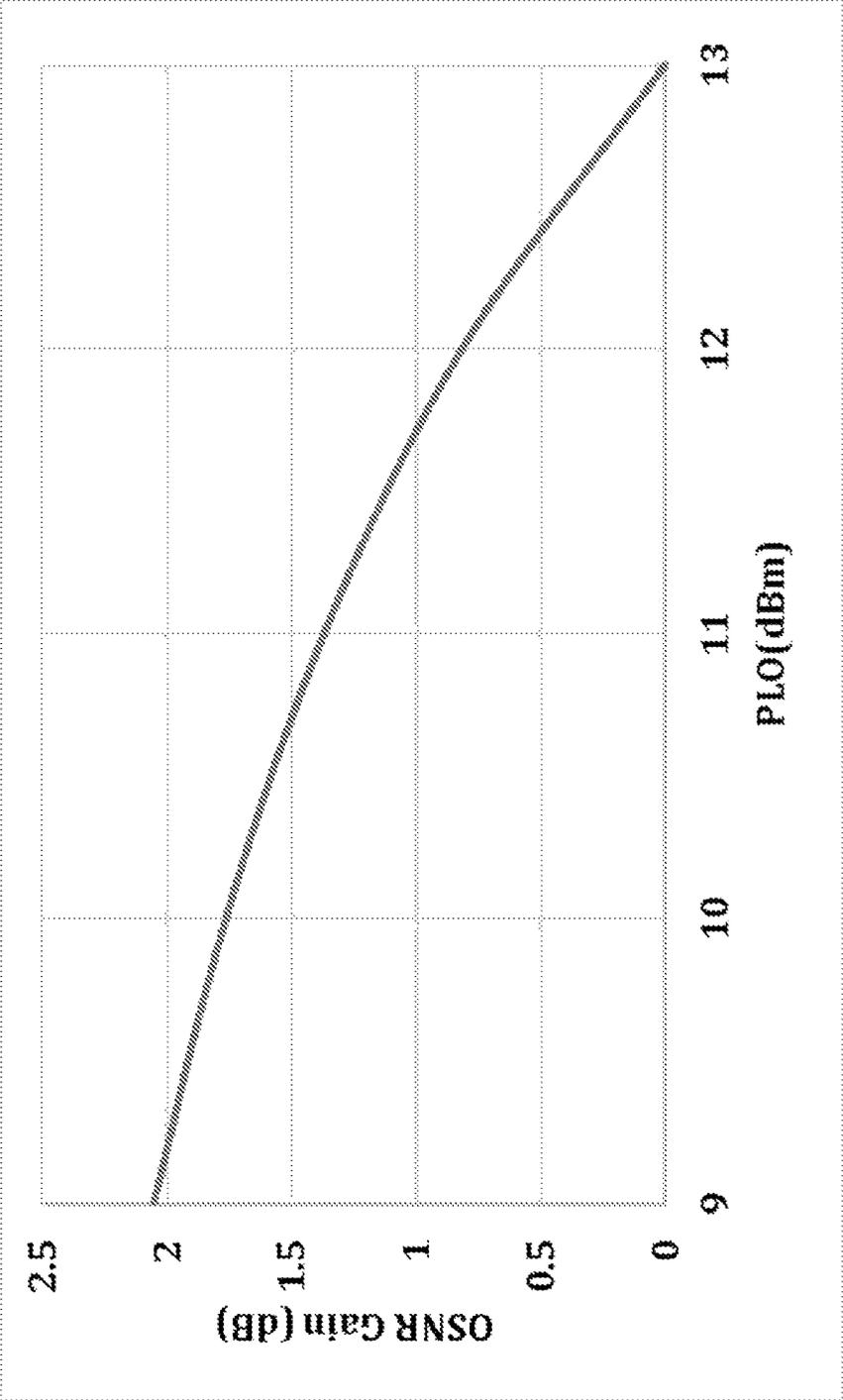


FIG. 3

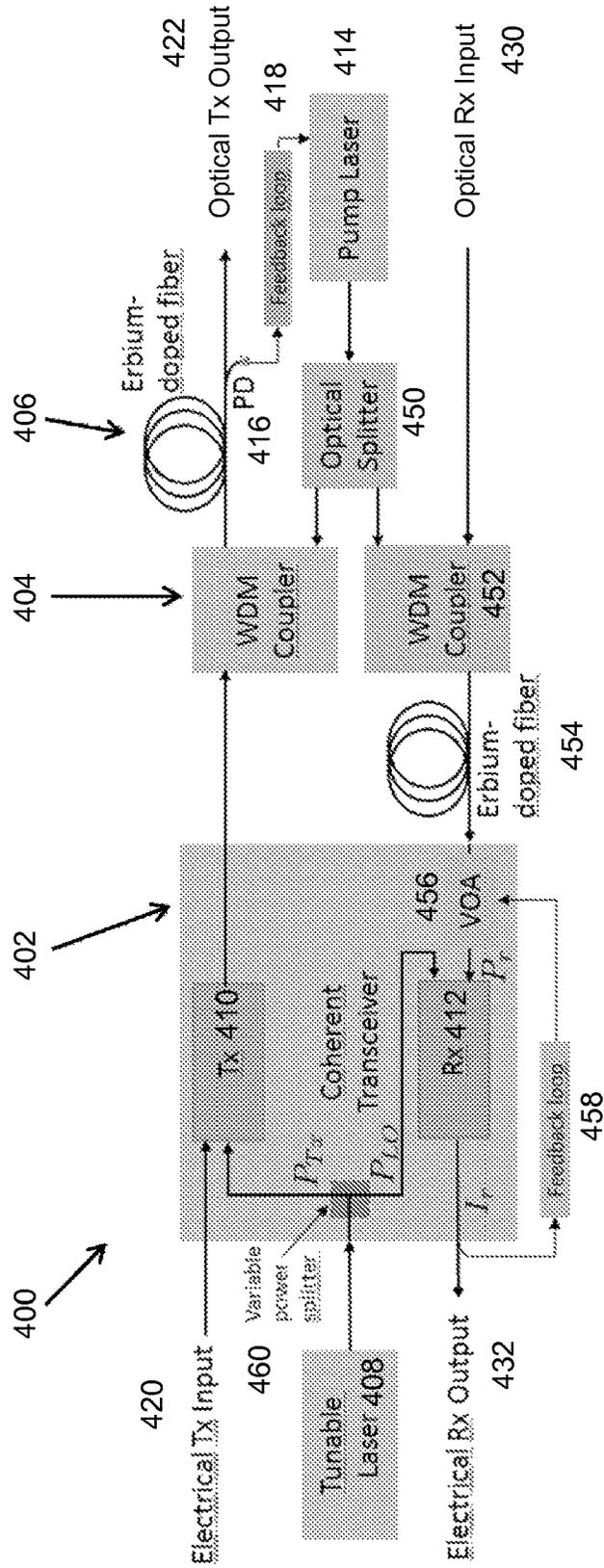


FIG. 4

TRANSMITTER OPTICAL SIGNAL TO NOISE RATIO IMPROVEMENT THROUGH RECEIVER AMPLIFICATION IN SINGLE LASER COHERENT SYSTEMS

CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

This application is a continuation of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 15/405,516, filed Jan. 13, 2017, now allowed, which is a continuation of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 14/794,889, filed Jul. 9, 2015, now U.S. Pat. No. 9,571,200, which is hereby incorporated by reference herein in its entirety.

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

The invention relates to optical communication systems in general and particularly to a receiver for an optical communication system.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

In coherent optical communication systems, optical amplifiers are often used at the output of the transmitter (Tx). Additionally, in power- and cost-constrained systems, a single laser may be shared between the transmitter and local oscillator (LO) in the receiver (Rx). In such a system using a Tx optical amplifier, the output Tx optical signal to noise ratio (OSNR) is typically limited by amplified spontaneous emission (ASE) noise due to the optical amplifier. The OSNR can be improved by reducing the insertion loss of the transmitter or by increasing the laser power dedicated to the transmitter. Typically, both of these parameters are fixed.

FIG. 1 is a schematic block diagram 100 of a prior art coherent optical transceiver 102, in which in-line power monitor photodiodes and fiber optic splices are omitted. A WDM coupler couples the light from pump laser 114 into the Tx EDFA 106. The Tx photodiode (PD) 116 is used to control the Tx EDFA 106 gain via a feedback loop 118 to control the pump laser 114 current. The light from the tunable laser 108 is shared between Tx 110 and Rx 112 and its splitting ratio is dictated by the required LO power P_{LO} as explained below. The incoming receiver signal power P_r and the target photo current $I_r \propto \sqrt{P_{LO} P_r}$ determine the LO power P_{LO} and, therefore, the Tx power P_{Tx} . As shown in FIG. 1, an electrical TX input 120, an optical Tx output 122, an optical RX input 130 and an electrical Rx output 132 are present.

The proportion of the system laser power dedicated to the Tx, P_{Tx} , is dictated by what is needed for the LO in the receiver. The required LO power, P_{LO} , is determined by the amount of gain one needs in the receiver. In coherent intradyne detection, the input received optical signal, P_r , is mixed with a higher powered local oscillator P_{LO} near the same frequency in order to boost the power in the mixing products at the intermediate frequencies $\omega_{IF} = \omega_r - \omega_{LO}$, where ω_r is a frequency within the signal bandwidth. Given a signal input power P_r , detector responsivity R, and target current output $I_r \propto R \sqrt{P_{LO} P_r}$, the LO power is fixed.

There is a need for systems that provide an optical communication system with improved optical signal to noise ratio.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

According to one aspect, the invention features a transceiver having an improved optical signal to noise ratio,

comprising: a transmitter having an electrical transmitter input port and an optical transmitter output port; a receiver having an optical receiver input port and an electrical receiver output port; a first coherent optical source shared between the transmitter and the receiver and configured to provide illumination with intensity P_T to the transmitter and illumination with intensity P_{LO} to the receiver; a second coherent optical source in optical communication with the optical transmitter output port by way of an optical coupler, the optical transmitter output port comprising a first optical amplifier, the second coherent optical source having a first optical feedback loop control; and a second optical amplifier configured to receive an input optical signal from the second coherent optical source, and to provide amplified illumination to an optical intensity controller, the optical intensity controller configured to provide controlled intensity illumination to the receiver, the optical intensity controller being part of a second feedback loop.

In one embodiment, the first coherent optical source is a tunable laser.

In another embodiment, the second coherent optical source is a pump laser.

In still another embodiment, at least one of the first optical amplifier and the second optical amplifier is a fiber amplifier.

In yet another embodiment, the fiber amplifier is an EDFA.

In a further embodiment, the first optical feedback loop control comprises a photodetector and an optical feedback loop controller.

In yet a further embodiment, the optical intensity controller is a variable optical attenuator.

In an additional embodiment, the second optical amplifier configured to receive an input optical signal from the second coherent optical source is in optical connection to the second coherent optical source by way of an optical splitter.

In one more embodiment, the improved optical signal to noise ratio is an improved transmitter optical signal to noise ratio.

In still another embodiment, the transceiver having an improved optical signal to noise ratio further comprises a variable power splitter configured to receive optical power from the first coherent optical source and configured to provide illumination with intensity P_T to the transmitter and illumination with intensity P_{LO} to the receiver so that the ratio between the intensity P_T and the intensity P_{LO} can be set to a desired value.

According to another aspect, the invention features an improved transceiver having an improved optical signal to noise ratio, the transceiver having a transmitter having an electrical transmitter input port and an optical transmitter output port, a receiver having an optical receiver input port and an electrical receiver output port, a first coherent optical source shared between the transmitter and the receiver and configured to provide illumination with intensity P_T to the transmitter and illumination with intensity P_{LO} to the receiver, and a second coherent optical source in optical communication with the optical transmitter output port by way of an optical coupler, the optical transmitter output port comprising a first optical amplifier, the second coherent optical source having a first optical feedback loop control; wherein the improvement comprises: a second optical amplifier configured to receive an input optical signal from the second coherent optical source, and to provide amplified illumination to an optical intensity controller, the optical intensity controller configured to provide controlled intensity illumination to the receiver, the optical intensity controller being part of a second feedback loop.

According to yet another aspect, the invention relates to a method of making a transceiver having an improved optical signal to noise ratio. The method comprises the steps of: providing a transmitter having an electrical transmitter input port and an optical transmitter output port; providing a receiver having an optical receiver input port and an electrical receiver output port; providing a first coherent optical source shared between the transmitter and the receiver and configured to provide illumination with intensity P_T to the transmitter and illumination with intensity P_{LO} to the receiver; providing a second coherent optical source in optical communication with the optical transmitter output port by way of an optical coupler, the optical transmitter output port comprising a first optical amplifier, the second coherent optical source having a first optical feedback loop control; and providing a second optical amplifier configured to receive an input optical signal from the second coherent optical source, and to provide amplified illumination to an optical intensity controller, the optical intensity controller configured to provide controlled intensity illumination to the receiver, the optical intensity controller being part of a second feedback loop.

According to still another aspect, the invention relates to a method of using a transceiver having an improved optical signal to noise ratio. The method comprises the steps of: providing a transmitter having an electrical transmitter input port and an optical transmitter output port; providing a receiver having an optical receiver input port and an electrical receiver output port; providing a first coherent optical source shared between the transmitter and the receiver and configured to provide illumination with intensity P_T to the transmitter and illumination with intensity P_{LO} to the receiver; providing a second coherent optical source in optical communication with the optical transmitter output port by way of an optical coupler, the optical transmitter output port comprising a first optical amplifier, the second coherent optical source having a first optical feedback loop control; providing a second optical amplifier configured to receive an input optical signal from the second coherent optical source, and to provide amplified illumination to an optical intensity controller, the optical intensity controller configured to provide controlled intensity illumination to the receiver, the optical intensity controller being part of a second feedback loop; operating the first coherent optical source and the second coherent optical source; applying at least one of an electrical input signal to the electrical transmitter input port and an optical input signal to the optical receiver input port; and performing at least one of: transmitting an optical signal responsive to the electrical input signal; and receiving an electrical signal responsive to the optical input signal.

The foregoing and other objects, aspects, features, and advantages of the invention will become more apparent from the following description and from the claims.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

The objects and features of the invention can be better understood with reference to the drawings described below, and the claims. The drawings are not necessarily to scale, emphasis instead generally being placed upon illustrating the principles of the invention. In the drawings, like numerals are used to indicate like parts throughout the various views.

FIG. 1 is a schematic block diagram of a prior art coherent optical transceiver.

FIG. 2 is a schematic diagram of one embodiment of an apparatus having a single pump laser source for two Erbium-doped fiber coils according to principles of the invention.

FIG. 3 is a graph showing the OSNR gain vs LO power relative to a 50:50 split of a 16 dBm output power tunable laser.

FIG. 4 is a schematic diagram of one embodiment of an apparatus having a single pump laser source for two Erbium-doped fiber coils and a tunable laser with a variable power splitter according to principles of the invention.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Acronyms

A list of acronyms and their usual meanings in the present document (unless otherwise explicitly stated to denote a different thing) are presented below.

20	ASE	Amplified Spontaneous Emission
	CMOS	Complementary Metal-Oxide-Semiconductor
	DBR	Distributed Bragg Reflector
	DSP	Digital Signal Processor
	ECL	External Cavity Laser
	EDFA	Erbium Doped Fiber Amplifier
	E/O	Electro-optical
25	FDTD	Finite Difference Time Domain
	FFE	Feed-Forward Equalization
	FOM	Figure of Merit
	FSR	Free Spectral Range
	FWHM	Full Width at Half Maximum
	LIV	Light intensity(L)-Current(I)-Voltage(V)
30	OSNR	Optical Signal to Noise Ratio
	PIC	Photonic Integrated Circuits
	PRBS	Pseudo Random Bit Sequence
	PDFA	Praseodymium-Doped-Fiber-Amplifier
	RSOA	Reflective Semiconductor Optical Amplifier
	Rx	Receiver
35	SMSR	Single-Mode Suppression Ratio
	Tx	Transmitter
	VOA	Variable Optical Attenuator
	WDM	Wavelength Division Multiplexing

This invention involves sharing the pump laser power used to operate the Tx fiber amplifier with an additional Rx fiber amplifier in order to improve the output Tx power and, as a result, the Tx OSNR of a coherent optical transceiver using a single pump laser source. Since the output signal power and the required gain of the Rx optical amplifier is much lower than those of the Tx optical amplifier, only a small fraction of the pump laser power is required for the Rx optical amplifier.

Example Implementation

FIG. 2 is a schematic diagram of one embodiment of an apparatus having a single pump laser source for two amplification fiber coils (in the embodiment illustrated, the amplification fiber coils are Erbium-doped fiber amplifier coils) according to principles of the invention. The method of using a single pump laser source for two amplification fiber coils is also described. The required gain and output power in the Rx optical amplifier is much lower than in the Tx optical amplifier. Therefore, the optical splitter need only tap off a small fraction of the pump laser power for the Rx optical amplifier. In other embodiments, amplifiers other than EDFA amplifiers may be used.

As illustrated in FIG. 2 is a schematic block diagram 200 of a prior art coherent optical transceiver 202, in which in-line power monitor photodiodes and fiber optic splices are omitted. The pump laser 214 provides illumination to an optical splitter 250 which can split the illumination in desired proportions. One portion of the illumination from

the pump laser **214** is provided to the WDM coupler **204** that couples into the optical Tx output. The Tx photodiode (PD) **216** is used to control the Tx EDFA **206** gain via a feedback loop **218** that samples the output of Tx EDFA **206** and controls the current driving the pump laser **214**. Another portion of the illumination from the pump laser **214** is provided by signal splitter **250** to the WDM coupler **252** that feeds an Erbium-doped fiber **256** which provides amplification of illumination entering on the Optical Rx input **230**. The amplified light exits the Erbium-doped fiber **256** and is fed into a VOA **256** that in turn feeds into the Rx **212**. The VOA **256** is controlled by a feedback loop **258** that samples the output of Rx **212**, and provides a control signal to the VOA **256**.

The light from the tunable laser **208** is shared between Tx **210** and Rx **212** and its splitting ratio is dictated by the required LO power P_{LO} . As shown in FIG. 2, an electrical TX input **220**, an optical Tx output **222**, an optical RX input **230** and an electrical Rx output **232** are present.

An increase of the signal power, P_s , at the receiver through an additional optical pre-amplifier with gain G_r , in front of the receiver allows one to lower the required LO power P_{LO} by the same factor G_r . In amplifier-noise limited transmission, for example in metro and long haul links using optical amplifier chains, the decrease in signal-to-noise ratio (SNR) at the receiver associated with the additional optical pre-amplifier noise is marginal as can be seen by the Friis formula:

$$F_{total} = F_1 + \frac{F_2 - 1}{G_1} + \frac{F_3 - 1}{G_1 G_2} + \frac{F_4 - 1}{G_1 G_2 G_3} + \dots + \frac{F_n - 1}{G_1 G_2 \dots G_{n-1}}$$

Here, F_{total} is the noise figure of the complete amplifier chain with amplifiers exhibiting individual gains G_i and noise figures F_i . The contribution of the last amplifier, in our case the additional optical pre-amplifier for the receiver, is strongly suppressed.

However despite of the benefit of an optical pre-amplifier, it is often not desirable to duplicate the pump laser due to cost and space concerns. Additionally, the electrical power required by an additional pump laser would be disadvantageous in small form factor devices, such as the CFP2 form factor.

While the Tx EDFA gain is controlled via the EDFA pump power, the gain control of the Rx EDFA fed by the same pump would require an additional variable optical attenuator (VOA) for the Rx EDFA pump light.

In the present invention, one uses a free running (not gain-controlled) Rx EDFA and one controls the Rx EDFA output power with a VOA. The Rx input VOA can more easily be implemented in the receiver input signal path.

For purposes of elucidation of features of the invention, one can stipulate that the coherent transceiver block outputs an average modulated Tx output power of -17 dBm. In conventional optical communication systems the typical system output power requirements are at least $+1$ dBm. Therefore, the Tx optical amplifier needs to supply 18 dB of gain. This may be accomplished with 18 meters of erbium-doped fiber and 30 mW of pump power.

In the Rx, only 5 or 10 dB of gain is desired, which can be accomplished with 5 meters of erbium-doped fiber and less than 10 mW of pump optical power. Therefore, a 40 mW pump laser can be used and a 1:4 splitter can supply both EDFA coils.

The 16 dBm laser input was previously being split 50:50 between Tx and Rx LO. With an Rx amplifier, 9 dBm could be used for the LO instead of 13 dBm. This would allow the Tx to use 15 dBm, for a gain in output OSNR of 2 dB.

Those of ordinary skill in the art will understand that the numerical values provided in the embodiment describe represent one example, and are provided for the purpose of explanation. Actual numerical values and power requirements may vary in different embodiments.

FIG. 3 is a graph showing the OSNR gain vs LO power relative to a 50:50 split of a 16 dBm output power tunable laser. Reducing P_{LO} from 13 dBm to 9 dBm allows one to increase P_{Tx} from 13 dBm to 15 dBm, thus boosting Tx OSNR by 2 dB.

As has been explained, the Rx fiber amplifier can be used to increase the Tx power/OSNR as much as possible. This is optimal for OSNR limited systems.

FIG. 4 is a schematic diagram of one embodiment of an apparatus having a single pump laser source for two Erbium-doped fiber coils and a tunable laser with a variable power splitter according to principles of the invention. In the embodiment illustrated, the amplification fiber coils are Erbium-doped fiber amplifier coils. In other embodiments, amplifiers other than EDFA amplifiers may be used.

As illustrated in FIG. 4 is a schematic block diagram **400** of a prior art coherent optical transceiver **402**, in which in-line power monitor photodiodes and fiber optic splices are omitted. The pump laser **414** provides illumination to an optical splitter **450** which can split the illumination in desired proportions. One portion of the illumination from the pump laser **414** is provided to the WDM coupler **404** that couples into the optical Tx output. The Tx photodiode (PD) **416** is used to control the Tx EDFA **406** gain via a feedback loop **418** that samples the output of Tx EDFA **406** and controls the current driving the pump laser **414**. Another portion of the illumination from the pump laser **414** is provided by signal splitter **450** to the WDM coupler **452** that feeds an Erbium-doped fiber **456** which provides amplification of illumination entering on the Optical Rx input **430**. The amplified light exits the Erbium-doped fiber **456** and is fed into a VOA **456** that in turn feeds into the Rx **412**. The VOA **456** is controlled by a feedback loop **458** that samples the output of Rx **412**, and provides a control signal to the VOA **456**.

The light from the tunable laser **408** is shared between Tx **410** and Rx **412** and its splitting ratio is controlled by a variable power splitter **460** so that the ratio between the Tx power P_{Tx} (or the intensity P_T) and the LO power P_{LO} (or the intensity P_{LO}) can be varied and can be set to a desired value. As shown in FIG. 4, an electrical TX input **420**, an optical Tx output **422**, an optical RX input **430** and an electrical Rx output **432** are present.

In combination with the single laser transceiver and a Rx fiber amplifier, a tunable laser with a variable power splitter in the transceiver allows for variable split ratios between the Tx power and the LO power. This variability enables a flexible trade-off between Tx OSNR and Rx sensitivity and dynamic range. In combination with a variable power splitter on the transceiver, as shown in FIG. 4, the shared pump Rx fiber amplifier provides a flexible transceiver capable of trading off Rx dynamic range vs Tx OSNR and, thus, extending the range of applications.

It is believed that for future metro and short reach networks which may be Rx input power limited, the shared pump Rx fiber amplifier could also be used to increase receiver dynamic range at the expense of Tx OSNR. By dedicating more laser power to the LO of the Rx together

with the amplification of the Rx input signal, the Rx sensitivity/dynamic range could be significantly increased. For a 50/50 split (13 dBm LO power for a 16 dBm input power laser), the full gain (5 to 10 dB) of the Rx fiber amplifier would be usable to increase the Rx sensitivity.

Design and Fabrication

Methods of designing and fabricating devices having elements similar to those described herein are described in one or more of U.S. Pat. Nos. 7,200,308, 7,339,724, 7,424,192, 7,480,434, 7,643,714, 7,760,970, 7,894,696, 8,031,985, 8,067,724, 8,098,965, 8,203,115, 8,237,102, 8,258,476, 8,270,778, 8,280,211, 8,311,374, 8,340,486, 8,380,016, 8,390,922, 8,798,406, and 8,818,141, each of which documents is hereby incorporated by reference herein in its entirety.

Definitions

As used herein, the term “optical communication channel” is intended to denote a single optical channel, such as light that can carry information using a specific carrier wavelength in a wavelength division multiplexed (WDM) system. In some embodiments, the the Rx input signal can in principle carry a large number of optical communication channels. The LO is used to select which of them shall be detected at any given time.

As used herein, the term “optical carrier” is intended to denote a medium or a structure through which any number of optical signals including WDM signals can propagate, which by way of example can include gases such as air, a void such as a vacuum or extraterrestrial space, and structures such as optical fibers and optical waveguides.

Theoretical Discussion

Although the theoretical description given herein is thought to be correct, the operation of the devices described and claimed herein does not depend upon the accuracy or validity of the theoretical description. That is, later theoretical developments that may explain the observed results on a basis different from the theory presented herein will not detract from the inventions described herein.

Any patent, patent application, patent application publication, journal article, book, published paper, or other publicly available material identified in the specification is hereby incorporated by reference herein in its entirety. Any material, or portion thereof, that is said to be incorporated by reference herein, but which conflicts with existing definitions, statements, or other disclosure material explicitly set forth herein is only incorporated to the extent that no conflict arises between that incorporated material and the present disclosure material. In the event of a conflict, the conflict is to be resolved in favor of the present disclosure as the preferred disclosure.

While the present invention has been particularly shown and described with reference to the preferred mode as illustrated in the drawing, it will be understood by one skilled in the art that various changes in detail may be affected therein without departing from the spirit and scope of the invention as defined by the claims.

What is claimed is:

1. An optical transceiver for receiving an electrical input signal and outputting an optical output signal responsive to the electrical input signal, and for receiving an optical input signal and outputting an electrical output signal responsive to the optical input signal, comprising:

a first shared optical source configured to generate input light;

a first splitter configured to divide the first input light into transmitter light and local oscillator (LO) light;
 an optical transmitter configured to receive the transmitter light and the electrical input signal and to transmit the optical output signal;
 a second shared optical source configured to emit pump light;
 a second splitter configured to divide the pump light into a first transmitter pump light portion and a second receiver pump light portion;
 a first gain-controlled optical amplifier configured to amplify the optical output signal;
 a second free-running optical amplifier configured to amplify the optical input signal;
 a coherent optical receiver configured to receive the input optical signal and the local oscillator (LO) light and to output the electrical output signal;
 a first control loop configured to sample the optical output signal and increasing power to the pump light, thereby increasing power to the first transmitter pump light portion for the first optical amplifier to increase amplification of the optical output signal, resulting in an increase in power to the second receiver pump light portion for the second optical amplifier to increase amplification of the optical input signal; and
 a variable optical attenuator (VOA) configured to attenuate the optical input signal in response to the amplification of the optical input signal by the second optical amplifier resulting from an increase in power to the pump light for amplification of the optical output signal by the first optical amplifier.

2. The transceiver according to claim 1, further comprising a second control loop configured to sample a portion of an output from the coherent optical receiver, and provide a control signal to the VOA for controlling optical power of the optical input signal received by the coherent optical receiver based on the amplification of the second optical amplifier, and an optical power of the LO light.

3. The transceiver according to claim 1, wherein the second splitter is configured to split the pump light, whereby the first transmitter pump light portion is greater than the second receiver pump light portion.

4. The transceiver according to claim 3, wherein the second splitter comprises a 1:4 splitter, whereby the first transmitter pump light portion comprises four times the pump power as the second receiver pump light portion.

5. The transceiver according to claim 1, further comprising a first optical coupler disposed to couple the first transmitter pump light portion into the first optical amplifier; and a second optical coupler disposed to couple the second receiver pump light portion into the second optical amplifier.

6. The transceiver according to claim 1, wherein the first control loop is configured to vary current to the second shared optical source in dependence upon the power of the output optical signal.

7. The transceiver according to claim 1, wherein the second splitter comprises a variable optical power splitter.

8. The transceiver according to claim 7, wherein the variable optical power splitter is configured to lower power of the LO light when gain in the second optical amplifier increases.

9. The transceiver according to claim 1, wherein the first shared optical source comprises a wavelength-tunable laser, and the second shared optical source comprises a pump laser.

10. The transceiver according to claim 1, wherein at least one of the first optical amplifier and the second optical amplifier comprises a fiber amplifier.

11. The transceiver according to claim 1, wherein the first control loop includes a photodetector for sampling the optical output signal, and a feedback loop controller.

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